

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SEOUL 6501

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OREP, PFOR, KS, US

SUBJECT: CODEL FINDLEY: CALL ON PRESIDENT PARK

BEGIN SUMMARY: CONGRESSMAN FINDLEY'S 90-MINUTE CALL ON PRESIDENT PARK AUG 22 IN MOST RESPECTS FOLLOWED PATTERN RECENT SUCCESSION OF CODEL DISCUSSIONS WITH PRESIDENT. MAIN POINTS OF DIFFERENCE WERE PRESIDENT'S GENERAL ATTITUDE (HE APPEARED WEARY OF HAVING REPEAT HIS ARGUMENTATION ON HUMAN RIGHTS TO STILL ANOTHER CONGRESSMAN), HIS RARE REFERENCES TO NORTH KOREAN ASSASSINATION ATTEMPTS, AND RESPONSE TO FINDLEY'S PROBE ABOUT PRESIDENT'S ATTITUDE TOWARD VISIT BY SOME US CONGRESSMAN TO NORTH KOREA. RESPONSE TO LATTER WAS RESTRAINED EXPLANATION OF HOW NORTH KOREANS WOULD EXPLOIT SUCH VISIT. END SUMMARY.

1. PRESIDENT GAVE LENGTHY JUSTIFICATION FOR HIS PROMULGATION OF CURRENT EMERGENCY MEASURES (SECURITY AND NATIONAL SURVIVAL), OUTLINING NATURE OF AND REASONS FOR SUSPENDING CERTAIN RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS. IN RESPONSE TO QUERY, HE OFFERED NO INDICATION THAT ANY CHANGE BEING CONTEMPLATED FOR IMMEDIATE FUTURE.

2. CONGRESSMAN'S PRESENTATION TO PRESIDENT OF SMALL BUST OF LINCOLN BROUGHT FORTH PRESIDENTIAL RECITATION OF ACTIONS WHICH LINCOLN HIMSELF HAD TAKEN TO SUSPEND CIVIL RIGHTS WHEN SURVIVAL OF U.S. WAS AT STAKE. PRESIDENT INTERPRETED FALL OF VIETNAM AND CAMBODIA AS RESULT OF
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LACK OF NATIONAL WILL AND DISCIPLINE, AND STRESSED HE

DETERMINED NOT TO PERMIT THOSE CONDITIONS TO EXIST HERE.

3. THROUGHOUT CONVERSATION PRESIDENT EXPRESSED GRATIFICATION FOR PAST US HELP AND SAID ALL KOREANS REGARD AMERICAN DEMOCRACY AS IDEAL, BUT STRESSED AGAIN AND AGAIN THAT STAGE OF DEVELOPMENT IN KOREA AND THREAT FROM NORTH MADE APPLICATION OF US YARDSTICK FOR DEMOCRACY UTTERLY INAPPROPRIATE. HE ARGUED THAT IF U.S. WERE TRUE FRIEND OF ROK, IT SHOULD WISH TO SEE STABLE, PROSPEROUS AND BASICALLY FREE SOCIETY INSTEAD OF ONE IN WHICH DISORDER AND CHAOS PREVAIL. MOST NOTABLE PART OF THIS DISCOURSE WAS RARE REFERENCE TO ATTEMPTS ON HIS OWN LIFE, INCLUDING BLUE HOUSE RAID AND ASSASSINATION OF HIS WIFE, AS REASONS FOR REQUIRING LIMITATIONS ON POLITICAL FREEDOMS.

4. CONGRESSMAN SOUGHT PRESIDENT'S REACTION TO THOUGHT THAT SOME US CONGRESSMAN (HE DENIED ANY PERSONAL INTEREST) MIGHT ATTEMPT TO GIVE BETTER PICTURE OF TRUE CONDITIONS AND ATTITUDES IN U.S. AND CREATE SOME BASIS FOR BETTER UNDERSTANDING BY MAKING TRIP TO PYONGYANG, PROVIDING OF COURSE THAT MOVES WERE FULLY COORDINATED IN ADVANCE WITH ROKG. PRESIDENT SAID THERE NOT SLIGHTEST CHANCE THAT ANY CONGRESSMAN COULD PERSUADE NORTH KOREANS TO OPEN THEIR SOCIETY OR CHANGE THEIR MINDS ABOUT U.S. OR ROK. THEIR SOLE OBJECTIVE IS TO COMMUNIZE KOREAN PENINSULA, BY FORCE IF NECESSARY. PRESENCE OF US FORCES IS MAJOR OBSTACLE. THEREFORE, NORTH KOREA SEEKS TO DRIVE A WEDGE BETWEEN US AND ROK AND TO FORCE WITHDRAWAL OF US FORCES. ANY CONGRESSMAN WHO VISITED NORTH KOREA WOULD BE TOLD THAT NORTH KOREANS DO NOT WANT WAR, THAT THEY WISH TO SOLVE UNIFICATION PROBLEM PEACEFULLY, AND THAT US FORCES ARE ONLY OBSTACLE TO THIS SOLUTION. INSTEAD OF PERSUADING NORTH KOREANS TO CHANGE THEIR MINDS, HOWEVER, VISITING CONGRESSMEN WOULD FIND THEMSELVES FACED WITH STRONG NORTH KOREAN EFFORT TO EXPLOIT THEIR PRESENCE AND TO PERSUADE AMERICA TO ACCEPT NORTH KOREAN POINT OF VIEW.

5. THIS LED TO DESCRIPTION BY PRESIDENT OF ROK
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INTENTION TO BUILD UP ITS OWN MILITARY CAPABILITY TO POINT WHERE NORTH KOREANS WILL REALIZE THAT THEY CANNOT TOPPLE ROKG, WHETHER U.S. PRESENT OR NOT. PRESIDENT SAID HE CONFIDENT THAT WITHIN FOUR OR FIVE YEARS, ROK GNP WOULD BE DOUBLED, PER CAPITA NATIONAL INCOME WOULD HAVE REACHED \$1,000 LEVEL, EXPORTS WOULD TOTAL \$10 BILLION ANNUALLY, AND KOREA WOULD BE CAPABLE OF SELF-RELIANT DEFENSE.

6. CONGRESSMAN ALSO PROVIDED PRESIDENT HIS IMPRESSION OF CHINESE ATTITUDES TOWARD KOREAN SITUATION, WHICH WAS TO EFFECT THAT CHINESE TRULY SUPPORT PEACEFUL UNIFICATION AND THAT DURING HIS RECENT VISIT TO CHINA HE HAD DETECTED NO COMMENTARY OR UNDERCURRENT WHICH COULD BE INTERPRETED AS SUPPORTING A MILITARY TAKEOVER. HE BELIEVED CHINESE WERE SATISFIED WITH PRESENT STATUS ON KOREAN PENINSULA AND SAW SOME ADVANTAGES TO OWN POSITION IN CONTINUING PRESENCE OF US FORCES. PRESIDENT WARNED CONGRESSMAN AGAINST ACCEPTING CHINESE STATEMENTS AT FACE VALUE AND REFERRED TO RECENT COMMUNIQUE WITH KIM IL SUNG IN WHICH CHINESE DEFINED NORTH KOREAN GOVERNMENT AS ONLY LEGITIMATE REGIME IN KOREA AND PLEDGED SUPPORT FOR KOREAN REVOLUTIONARY STRUGGLE. HE WARNED THAT WORD "PEACEFUL" MEANS DIFFERENT THINGS TO CHINESE AND AMERICANS. TO CHINESE IT MEANS COMMUNIZATION BY INTERNAL SUBVERSION, AND NOT CHANGE THROUGH FREE ELECTIONS REFLECTING WILL OF PEOPLE.

7. COMMENT: IT OBVIOUS THAT PRESIDENT WAS FEELING STRAIN OF HAVING (BY HIS OWN CHOICE) TO OFFER ESSENTIALLY SAME EXPLANATION OF HIS DOMESTIC POLITICAL ACTIONS AND DEFENSE EFFORTS TO SUCCESSION OF VISITING CONGRESSMEN. HE WAS, IN FACT, NOTABLY TESTY DURING CERTAIN PARTS OF THIS CONVERSATION, PARTICULARLY WHEN REFERRING TO LACK OF AMERICAN WILLINGNESS TO JUDGE KOREAN POLITICAL AND SECURITY SITUATION BY YARDSTICK OF KOREAN REALITY. HIS REACTION TO CONGRESSMEN'S PROBE ABOUT POSSIBILITY OF VISIT TO NORTH KOREA WAS, HOWEVER, MORE RESIGNED THAN ANGRY.

8. WHILE PRESIDENT OFFERED NO HOPE OF CHANGE IN STATUS OF EMERGENCY MEASURES, NATIONAL ASSEMBLY SPEAKER CHONG IL KWON TOLD CHARGE AT DINNER FOR CODEL, THAT BEFORE
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CHRISTMAS PRESIDENT WOULD RELIEVE SITUATION OF VARIOUS CHRISTIAN LEADERS NOW FACING TRIAL. HE COULD NOT OFFER SPECIFICS.
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